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Warrick County Prior to 1818

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For many years prior to the organization of Warrick county, the southwestern part of Indiana was in the hands of the Indians. On account of their migratory nature it is difficult to say just what Indian tribes inhabited these parts. The Miamis, Wyandots, Delawares, Pottawatomies, Kickapoos, Shawnees, Weas, and the Piankeshaws were the most closely connected with this part of the State. At one time the Delaware Indians had a village, called Delaware Old Town, near the present site of Newburg, Indiana.⁸ In 1801 there was another Delaware town on the Ohio opposite Henderson, Kentucky.⁹ Later there was an Indian town on the head waters of Little Pigeon creek. Some time before 1800 the Piankeshaws had two villages not far from Jasper, Indiana.¹⁰ The last Indian village in Warrick county was probably that of the Shawnees. This tribe, as late as 1812, was located near the mouth of Cypress creek.¹¹ Though it is said for a number of years that the Indians would occasionally return for a hunt on Pigeon creek.¹²

Many years prior to the first English settlement west of the Allegheny mountains, the Indians of the northwest found their favorite hunting ground in Kentucky. In late summer they would cross the Ohio river to take their annual hunt and return again in early winter. After the Kentucky hunting ground became the home of the white settlers, the region of the Ohio river became the fighting ground of the two peoples and from time to time it was necessary to send out regular expeditions to quiet the Indians.

Among the early expeditions of this kind was that of Colonel Josiah Harmar, who was sent to make peace with the

⁸ The *St. Clair Papers*, II., 26; *Readings in Indiana History*, 65.

⁹ *Indiana Quarterly Magazine of History*, II., 7.

¹⁰ George R. Wilson, *History of Dubois County*, 103.

¹¹ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 220.

¹² *Evansville's Men of Mark*, 9.

Indians around Vincennes.¹³ He was ordered to move his small army from Louisville, where he was encamped, to Vincennes. On account of the great difficulty and danger of traveling the Vincennes Trace, he decided to go by water. On July 6, 1787, Capt. David Zeigler, with sixty men, in eight boats, two keel boats, one small keel boat, and two canoes, laden with provisions, was dispatched from the Falls¹⁴ down the Ohio river.¹⁵ The next day Colonel Harmar followed with the rest of the army. On the 10th of July the fleet landed at what was called the "landing and carrying place"¹⁶ in what was later Warrick county. This landing was also called the "rocks" and was about eight miles above the mouth of Green river.¹⁷ From this point a trace ran to Vincennes.¹⁸ The fleet was put under the command of Maj. John F. Hamtramck and sent up the Wabash to Vincennes. On the 11th of July, Colonel Harmar, with the rest of the troops, started by land to Vincennes. The weather was rather warm and the men had to carry fifteen days' flour on their backs. Colonel Harmar, in describing the country, said: "From the Ohio, where we set out for the White river, we had a very difficult march, the country being full of thickets and scarce of water."¹⁹ After some years of desultory warfare, peace was concluded with the Indians in 1795.²⁰ The Ohio river was made the southern boundary line between the two peoples and neither was supposed to trespass on the land of the other. Nevertheless, the settlers in Kentucky soon made it a practice to cross over the river into the Indiana territory every fall to kill bear, deer and buffaloe, merely for the skins.²¹ In this manner they so thinned out the game in the southwestern part of the terri-

¹³ *The St. Clair Papers*, II., 22, note.

¹⁴ The falls of the Ohio were almost opposite the present site of Louisville.

¹⁵ *The St. Clair Papers*, II., 24.

¹⁶ *The St. Clair Papers*, II., 25, 26.

¹⁷ *The St. Clair Papers*, II., 26.

¹⁸ The exact course of this trace is not known. However, Colonel Harmar was familiar with it before making his trip down the Ohio. It is probable that it left the Ohio near the site of the present town of Newburg and continued nearly north along Big Pigeon creek hitting White river near the Western boundary of Pike county. *The St. Clair Papers*, II., 24, 25, 26, 27.

¹⁹ *The St. Clair Papers*, II., 27.

²⁰ J. P. Dunn, *Indiana*, 266.

²¹ Moses Dawson, *A Historical Narrative of the Civil and Military Services of Major-General William H. Harrison*, 8.

tory that the Indians began to complain of their injuries and again started their depredations. An interesting story of these early times was told to the father of Colonel Cockrum by Jean La Ture, a pioneer boatsman on the Ohio and Mississippi:

He (LaTure) said that his father was with Lafayette for a while during the Revolutionary War and afterward settled in Virginia, where he married a beautiful French woman. He himself had been born in Virginia and was about ten years old when his father resolved to move to Kentucky. After staying there three years he decided to come to Indiana territory and to Vincennes, where he learned he had relatives. "We had two horses," said LaTure, "and loaded one with our plunder and the other was for my mother and eight-year-old sister to ride. We started and traveled several days, coming to Green river. We followed it to the point where it runs into the Ohio and then could find no way to cross either river, so we went up the Ohio for seven or eight miles and found a family of friendly Indians, who carried us over in a canoe, the horses swimming. This was in the fall of 1803. We then traveled in a northerly direction for more than a day, when we came to a large creek (Big Pigeon). Following along this creek we crossed one of its forks (no doubt Big creek in Greer township, Warrick county) and continued for several miles farther and came to another fork (Smith's Fork). We did not cross this, but went up the south bank until we found some high land and selected a place for a camp, intending to stay a few days and rest. After being in camp about two days, nine or ten Indians came, pretending to be very friendly. We gave them food, which they ate, but after finishing their meal they jumped up so suddenly that we had no time to think; giving a loud yell one caught me, another my little sister and a third attempted to hold my mother, but she got hold of an axe and in the scuffle struck the blade in the Indian's thigh, severing the main artery, from which he bled to death. Another Indian ran up back of my mother killing her with a club. My father was killed at the fort by two Indians with clubs. About half of them took the dead Indian away and were gone for some time. The rest loaded our plunder on the horses and we went away to the north, leaving my father and mother where they fell, after taking their scalps. After wandering that day and a part of the next we came to a big Indian town near a river, which I think is now White river. My little sister was left there and I never saw her again. I was then taken to an Indian town near Lake Michigan and lived with the Indians for several years. I went with a party on a hunting expedition and was gone several days, during which trip I made my escape and met a party of General Harrison's soldiers after the battle of Tippecanoe and went with them to Vincennes. I went through the War of 1812 and since then I have hunted Indians and killed every one that I could find."²²

In 1804 the Indians were again brought to terms. By the treaty of August 18, 1804, the Delaware Indians ceded to the

United States all their rights to the tract of land which lay between the Ohio and Wabash rivers and below the tract ceded by the treaty of Fort Wayne, and the road leading from Vincennes to the falls of the Ohio river. For this territory the national government gave the Delaware Indians an additional annuity of three hundred dollars; promised persons to teach them to make fences, and cultivate the soil; and lastly to give them horses fit for draught, cattle, hogs, and implements of husbandry to the amount of four hundred dollars.²³ On August 27, the Piankeshaws, who laid claim to the above tract, relinquished their title. As a compensation they received an additional annuity of two hundred dollars for ten years, and merchandise, provisions, or domestic animals, and implements of husbandry, at the option of the tribe, to the value of seven hundred dollars.²⁴ This treaty gave to the United States the extreme southwestern part of Indiana and at once settlers began to come into the country.

Previous to this the settlers had been warned to keep off the land of the Indians. Many emigrants from Virginia, Tennessee and the Carolinas had already squatted along the Ohio in Kentucky, waiting for the government to open up the new country. Immediately following the opening of this region, a large number of settlers came into southwestern Indiana. It was about this time that Warrick county got its first permanent settlers.²⁵

Nearly every locality has its "first settlers", but rarely do the first actual settlers of a community come down to the present as such. There are two kinds of first settlers: those preserved by tradition and those found in the records of the land entries. The first were prominent men of affairs in their neighborhood after it became more thickly settled. The second may or may not have been the first settler. In most all cases, however, the squatter preceded the so-called "first settlers." These facts must be borne in mind in reading the accounts of these "first settlers."

²² William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 171-3.

²³ *The American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, I., 689.

²⁴ *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, I., 690.

²⁵ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 200.

The first white person to make a permanent settlement in what is now Warrick county seems to have been Major John Sprinkle.²⁶ He was born in Pennsylvania, in 1772, and later moved to Henderson county, Kentucky. During his residence in Kentucky he was awarded the title of major of the Kentucky state militia. He was a man of honor and high social standing in the community.²⁷ In 1803 he removed to Indiana, settling on the present site of Newburg, where he remained until his death in 1821.²⁸ In the fall of the same year (1803) James Lynn and Felty Hay moved into that neighborhood.²⁹ A little later Bailey Anderson crossed over the river from Kentucky and settled near the mouth of Cypress creek.³⁰

Like many of the early settlers, Bailey Anderson's entire baggage consisted of an axe, gun, and a supply of ammunition. It is said that while he was building his cabin he lodged at night in a tree. This novel bed was made by fixing pieces of timber across two branches of a tree and spreading over them, the skins of wild animals. This place was later known as "Bailey's Roost". A few months afterward four other families, the Briscoes, Skeltons, Vanadas and the Arnolds,³¹ moved into the vicinity. It was a desirable location and these were soon followed by others.

²⁶ James Lynn settled in Warrick county as early as 1801. However, this was not a permanent settlement. *History of Warrick, Spencer and Perry Counties*, 191.

²⁷ The Sprinkles came to Henderson in 1792. Not long afterwards George Springle, probably the brother of Major Sprinkle, was captured on the Indiana side of the river by the Indians. However, he was finally surrendered to the American soldiers at Fort Wayne and allowed to return to his home at Henderson.—Monte M. Katterjohn, *Warrick and its Prominent People*. 69.

²⁸ *History of Warrick, Spencer and Perry Counties*, 21.

²⁹ Will Fortune, *Warrick and its Prominent People*, 16.

³⁰ Bailey Anderson was one of the leading men of the county. The exact date of his coming to the county is not known. Will Fortune in his book, *Warrick and its Prominent People*, gives the date of his coming as 1805. The *History of Warrick, Spencer and Perry Counties* gives the date as 1807. We do know that Bailey Anderson was on the rangers' service in 1807. His coming was some time prior to that. After having served on the Rangers, he was made captain of the Knox county militia, in 1808. It was at his house that the early courts of the county were held and he himself became judge of the court of common pleas of the county in 1813. The following year he was made an associate judge of the Warrick county circuit court. Nothing further is known of his life. *Indiana Historical Society Publications*, III., 148; Will Fortune, *Warrick and its Prominent People*, 16, 43; *History of Warrick, Spencer and Perry Counties*, 24; William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 220.

³¹ Will Fortune, *Warrick and its Prominent People*, 17.

Although the first permanent settlement was made in the county as early as 1803, the land was not surveyed until 1805.³² Prior to this all the settlers were necessarily squatters. Even these, on account of the great distance they were required to travel to get a title for the land, many preferred to remain squatters. In 1807, William Johnson entered the first tract of land in the county.³³ This tract contained 205½ acres on the present site of Newburg. Other early land entries in the county³⁴ were made by Daniel Rhoads, in 1810; Richard Vankirk, Felty Hay and Solomon Land, in 1811; John Vanada, Joseph English and Ratliff Boon, in 1812.³⁵ Since these were the only land entries in the county down to 1812, it does not follow that these were the only settlers.

A great deal has been written about pioneers. The first inhabitants of Warrick county had much in common with all the early settlers in the State. Probably the only special feature of the county was the unusual abundance of game. The canebrakes along the Ohio river and the thickets along Big

³² *History of Warrick, Spencer and Perry Counties*, 22.

³³ *History of Warrick, Spencer and Perry Counties*, 22.

³⁴ *History of Warrick, Spencer and Perry Counties*, 22, 2y, 27.

³⁵ Hon. Ratliff Boon, ex-governor of the State of Indiana was born in Georgia, (some say in North Carolina), in 1781. He was the cousin of the noted pioneer, Daniel Boon and the son-in-law of Bailey Anderson. His parents moved to Danville, Kentucky, and there he was put in the public schools. He also learned the trade of gunsmith. In 1809 he moved to Indiana settling about two miles west of the present site of Boonville.

Colonel Boon through his unusual tact and sagacity made himself one of the most prominent men in Indiana during the early days. He had force of character and had a way of making loyal friends. In 1812 he was commissioned lieutenant in the Fourth Indiana regiment. The next year, Warrick county was organized and he became the first treasurer, which office he held until 1820. On the admission of Indiana into the union in 1816, Boon was elected to the State legislature as representative of Warrick county. In 1818 he was elected to the State senate. The following year he was chosen as lieutenant governor and upon the resignation of Governor Jennings he filled out the unexpired term. He was re-elected as lieutenant governor at the next election resigned on January 30, 1824 to become a candidate for Congress. He was elected on the Jackson Democratic ticket. He was defeated by Col. Thomas H. Blake for representative in the 20th congress. However, he was a member of the 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th congresses. With the 25th congress he ended his political connections with Indiana.

In 1839, Colonel Boon removed to Pike county, Missouri, where he was defeated by Thomas H. Benton in caucus, as a candidate for United States senator. This practically ended his political life. He died in 1846. Will Fortune, *Warrick and its Prominent People*; William Wesley Wollen, *Biographical and Historical sketches of Early Indiana*; *A Biographical Congressional Directory, 1774-1911*, 486; *Indiana Historical Society Publications*, III., 186, 208.

Pigeon, Cypress and Little Pigeon creeks were their favorite hiding places. A few stories of early hunting in the county have been preserved.

In the fall of 1807, when the deer were at their best and the bears fat upon the mast, Major Sprinkle and his two kinsmen, cousins from Pennsylvania, went a little way back from the river and made a camp, intending to have a week's hunting. They had been hunting two or three days when the boys had an experience, the marks of which they carried to the end of their lives. They had been following a drove of deer for some time, when they came upon an old bear and two cubs eating acorns under a white oak tree. One of the boys shot one of the small bears, knocking it down. The old mother and the other little one ran off. It seemed that the little bear was only stunned and was not fatally injured and was soon up, staggering around. The young men ran up to it, intending to finish it with their hunting knives. They laid down their guns, but had not quite reached the place where the young bear was, until the old mother came at them savagely.

They attempted to get their guns, but before they succeeded the old bear knocked one of them down. The other got his gun, but it was empty, and rushing at the bear that was fighting his brother he struck it over the head with the barrel of the gun. The bear knocked the gun out of his hands with such force that it broke his arm. The other brother, though badly wounded, got his gun and attempted to shoot the bear in the head as it was biting his brother, but his aim was so bad that he only slightly wounded it, and then the bear turned upon him and knocked him down, biting his legs in a fearful manner. The boy with the broken arm stabbed the bear many times with his hunting knife and finally hurt it fatally. It started, however, to follow the cubs, but had gone only a few yards when it laid down and died. The young men were found by the Major and taken to camp and then to his cabin, where they were for several months before they were able to be out. This experience satisfied their roving dispositions and they returned to their Pennsylvania homes.

Long after the game was thinned out of the surrounding country, the old Polk Patch, now Selvin, Warrick county, remained a good hunting ground. As late as 1824, David Johnson, Jessie Houchins, Joel Harden and Conrad LeMasters pitched their hunting camp at Polk Patch. On the first day they killed several deer and a bear. They were so successful in their hunting that they had more game than they knew what to do with. Of the deer only the hind quarters and the hides were aken, the rest left where it was killed. The second

³⁶ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 502.

day Mr. LeMasters was seriously hurt in a fight with a bear and the party had to return home.³⁷

The woods were full of troublesome and dangerous animals. The wolf was so despised that a price was put on his scalp. A wolf's scalp was worth two dollars.³⁸ The following incident, which took place at the Sprinkle settlement in 1812, is told of the most dangerous of these animals.

There was a young girl who lived with one of these families at the Sprinkles settlement who was expecting a sister from central Tennessee. She was very uneasy about her, fearing that she had been captured by the Indians. Late one evening, just before dusk, a whining, piteous cry was heard, which did not seem like the scream of a panther, as it was continuous. This girl heard the noise and declared it was the cry of her sister, and nothing could stop her from going out to it. Before the men in the fort realized her intentions, she was running in the direction of the noise. Three of the men got their rifles and hurried after her. They were uncertain what it was, thinking it might be the ruse of the Indians trying to imitate the cry of a woman or child to draw some of the people into an ambush. The men had gone nearly a quarter of a mile when they heard the most terrible scream of the panther mingled with the outcry of the unfortunate girl. Hurrying as fast as they could, when they located the scream, they were very cautious in their advance. Coming to an open space they saw several animals which were biting and scratching the body of the girl they had killed. The men killed the old panther and two of the young ones that she, no doubt, was teaching to scream, which was the cause of the peculiar noise which they had heard. After she had killed the girl she was teaching the young ones how to attack their prey, and she would bound onto the prostrate form and bite and scratch it. The kittens would go through the same motions and thus had torn her into pieces.³⁹

These pioneers had other things to do as well as to fish and hunt. Houses had to be built, land had to be cultivated, and homes protected. For many years the early settlers of Warrick county were continually in danger of Indian raids. Early in the first decade of the nineteenth century, in order to give them more safety, they enlarged the Old Indian Traces into a complete system of roads.

The first roads of the state were usually the old Indian trails or the Buffalo paths. Of these early trails probably the

³⁷ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 175.

³⁸ On December 24th, 1816, the Indiana legislature passed a law providing that for the killing of each wolf two months old and upwards, the person should receive \$2.00 and for wolves under that \$1.00. To get the pay the person had to produce the scalp, with the ears entire and within one month after the killing.

³⁹ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 503.

best known in the southwestern part of the State was the Vincennes Trace.⁴⁰ Long before the first white settlers came into the country this trace was a fairly well defined route, for both the Indians and Buffaloes, between the Bluegrass region in Kentucky and the Illinois prairies. Later it became one of the regular lines of travel leading into the interior of Indiana. There were two main branches of this trace, a northern and southern route. The northern route led from Louisville, Jeffersonville and New Albany by Greenville, Fredericksburg, Paoli, Mount Pleasant,⁴¹ and Maysville to Vincennes on the Wabash river.⁴² The southern route followed along the Northern Trace to Paoli where it branched off to the westward and entered Dubois County at Union Valley,⁴³ passed to the south of Haysville and Pottersville, leaving the county near the Miley schoolhouse,⁴⁴ thence through northern Pike county, crossing White river at Decker's ferry to the northwest of Petersburg, and thence to Vincennes on the Wabash.⁴⁵ These routes later became stage-coach roads.

Three other traces in southwestern Indiana were traveled previous to the opening of that region to settlement. The first of these, traveled by Colonel Harmar, has already been discussed. This trace, although important at one time, seems later to have disappeared but the other two routes; the Red Banks trace and the Yellow Banks trace, were well known to the early settlers. The Red Banks trace crossed the Ohio river at Red Bank Island, about a mile below the present site of Henderson, Kentucky, and ran northward through what is now Vanderburg and Gibson counties to Vincennes.⁴⁶ In 1801 Governor Harrison asked the national government to

⁴⁰ This trace was also known as the "Buffalo Trace", "Mud Holes", "Governor's Trace", "Louisville Trace", "Vincennes-Ohio Falls Trace", "Clarksville Trace" and the "Old Trace", *Readings in Indiana History*, 156; George R. Wilson, *History of Dubois County*, 27, 100, 158; William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 223.

⁴¹ Mount Pleasant was on the east branch of White River, (Driftwood branch) in Rutherford township in Martin county.

⁴² *Readings in Indiana History*, 157

⁴³ Union Valley is in the Northeastern Dubois County near the central part of Columbia township. George R. Wilson, *History of Dubois County*, 284.

⁴⁴ Miley Schoolhouse is in northwestern Dubois county in the southwestern part of Boone township. George R. Wilson, 284.

⁴⁵ George R. Wilson, *History of Dubois County*, 27; *History of Pike and Dubois Counties*, 1885, 251.

send a deputy to the Indians to arrange for the opening of this trace.⁴⁷ In 1802 the crossing at the Ohio river was made more convenient by the establishment of a ferry at Henderson by Jonathan Anthony.⁴⁸ Another ferry, called Blair's ferry, was established six miles farther up stream.⁴⁹ With the opening of the southwestern part of the state to settlement in 1804 this trace became one of the important routes to the interior.

The Yellow Banks trace⁵⁰ crossed the Ohio river at the Yellow Bank island, almost opposite Owensboro, Kentucky, and ran northward past Rockport, to the headwaters of Little Pigeon, thence near the present site of Selvin, thence in a northwesterly direction to Honey Springs,⁵¹ thence along the spring branch to the Little Patoka river, thence to the northward crossing the Big Patoka about forty miles up stream at a good ford and continued to the forks of White river and the Vincennes trace.⁵² This route, at first an Indian trace, was later used by the early settlers as a route to the interior.

With the opening of the southwestern part of the State to settlement, other routes of travel became necessary. One of the earliest of these ways of travel was the Blue River trace. This trace crossed the Ohio at the west end of the large bend about three miles west of Blue river and ran north hitting the Vincennes trace about forty miles east of the Mud Holes.⁵³ There was a road in Kentucky leading to the south bank of the Ohio. Two other traces appeared almost simultaneously with the first settlements. These were the routes to the salt works in southeastern Illinois. One of the most difficult problems of the pioneer was to keep a supply of salt. One of these salt routes ran from Vincennes southward, crossed

⁴⁶ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 324; Thwaites *Early Western Travels*, IV., 266; Samuel Cummings, *The Western Pilot for 1834*, 64.

⁴⁷ Moses Dawson, *Life of Harrison*, 18.

⁴⁸ Edmund L. Starling, *History of Henderson County*, 118.

⁴⁹ Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, IV., 266.

⁵⁰ Yellow Banks was called Weesoe Wasapinuk by the Kickapoos, William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 174.

⁵¹ Honey Springs were in the southwestern part of Pike county near Spurgeon. *Historical Atlas of the State of Indiana*, 171.

⁵² William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 174, 212, 256, 156, 177, 205, 207; Samuel Cummings, *The Western Pilot for 1834*, 58.

⁵³ The Mud Holes were on the southern branch of the Vincennes trace almost south of Portersville.

White river near David Robb's place and the Patoka at John Severn's,⁵⁴ thence in a southwest direction to near the present site of New Harmony, thence across the Wabash river near the point where the Little Wabash empties into the main stream and thence to Saline creek.⁵⁵ Another one of these routes used by the early settlers for the same purpose, crossed the Wabash near the Saline region and followed the Ohio eastward, passing near the present site of Newburg, Indiana, then with the course of the river eastward across Blue river trace and probably to the Fall on the Ohio.⁵⁶ Before the settlement of this part of the State the Ohio trace had been a regular passway for the Indians from time immemorial.⁵⁷ On account of the scarcity of salt these routes were of extreme importance.⁵⁸

The early settlers down to 1820 experienced great difficulty in getting sufficient salt for cooking purposes and to save their meat. It was very hard to get and high priced, usually selling for ten to twenty cents a pound in backwoods currency.⁵⁹ The people were very saving with it. Meat was placed in a meat trough made of a poplar tree and salted. After the meat had taken all the salt it would, the brine which had collected in the bottom of the trough was saved to be used again. On account of the danger from Indian attacks, the early settlers from this region of the country went in squads to the salt springs and camped on the ground until they had sufficient salt for the year. The salt was sacked and brought home on horseback.⁶⁰

Bradbury in his *Travels in the Interior of America* (1809-

⁵⁴ In 1807 there were two ferries across the Patoka near the crossing of this trace, one by John Severn's and the other by John Miller's. Miller's ferry was about three miles above the mouth of Patoka river. *Indiana Historical Society Publications*, III., 140-1.

⁵⁵ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 216.

⁵⁶ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 220.

⁵⁷ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 221.

⁵⁸ In the fall of 1807 salt became so scarce and so high priced that a number of the settlers south of White river petitioned the governor for an escort of soldiers to protect them while on the trail and at the salt works west of the Wabash river. William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 216.

⁵⁹ However by 1823 the price of salt had fallen to 37½ cents a bushel at Shawneetown. *Niles Register*, XXIX, 165.

⁶⁰ Joseph P. Elliott, *History of Evansville and Vanderburg County, Indiana*, 54; William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 474.

11) described the salt manufacturing at the Wabash Salt Springs⁶¹ as follows:

They first ascertain by boring at what depth they shall come to the rock, and afterwards look out for a hollow tree, which must be at least from three to four feet in diameter. This they cut down carefully for fear of splitting and saw off such a length as will reach from the surface of the ground to the rock. If the hollow of the tree is not large enough to allow sufficient space for a man to work within, they enlarge it. A well is next dug, and when so deep that there is danger of the earth falling in, the trunk is put down and sunk to the surface of the rock. After the influx of fresh water is prevented by calkins around the edges at the bottom of the trunk, the perforation is made. And the salt water immediately rises to the surface.⁶²

Some years later, in 1814, a party of men undertook to establish a salt well on Cypress creek, in Warrick county. This well was put down about two or three miles back from the Ohio river at a deer lick. After boring to a considerable depth without any satisfactory results the men engaged in the work became discouraged and abandoned the enterprise.⁶³ Another attempt was made on Pigeon creek. For a number of years, it was thought that salt water could be obtained on this stream. Two enterprising citizens of the county put down a well 528 feet deep and obtained a tolerable supply of salt water from which they made from twenty-five to thirty bushels of salt a day.⁶⁴ Not being satisfied, they bored deeper and hit mineral water which ruined the well.⁶⁵

Along in 1805, in 1806 and in 1807 the Indians were loud in their declarations that the whites should be driven beyond

⁶¹ The Wabash Saline springs were in the southeastern part of Illinois, along the Ohio river, below the mouth of the Wabash and near the present site of Shawneetown. These springs were so important that in 1802 they were taken over by the national government. *United States Statutes at Large*, 14th Congress, 1st session, ch. 67, 68; Moses Dawson, *Life of Harrison*, 30.

⁶² Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, V., 276; for further references on this subject see: Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, I., 108. III., 283; IV., 271; V., 276-8; Vincennes *Western Sun*, April 29, 1809; George R. Wilson, *History of Dubois County*, 48.

⁶³ Will Fortune, *Warrick and Its Prominent People*, 40.

⁶⁴ The salt springs of the west generally produced a bushel of salt from one hundred gallons of water. Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, VIII, 283.

⁶⁵ *The Indiana Gazette*, 1833, 30.

the Ohio river.⁶⁶ Bands of Indians were continually roving through the country to the south of White river.⁶⁷ They became more active than usual in their depredations. There is no doubt that many people of whom we have no account were captured or killed in attempting to settle in this part of the State. For the better protection of these settlers, Governor Harrison constituted in the early part of 1807, the Ranger service.⁶⁸ Col. William Hargrove, 69, was put in command of the troops in the southwestern part of the State. Under his protection two new traces were laid out and patrolled.

The first of these routes, the Patoka trace, started near John Severn's (where the Redbanks trace crossed the Patoka river) and ran along the south bank of that stream, across the Yellow Banks trace and eastward to the Blue River trace. The second started from the Red Banks trace at a point fifteen miles north of the Ohio river and ran eastward parallel with that stream to the Blue River trace.⁷⁰ These traces as

⁶⁶ Following is an extract from a letter of W. H. Harrison, governor of Indiana Territory to Captain William Hargrove, in command of the Rangers which showed the attitude of the Indians toward the settlers beyond the Ohio river:

"The times are very unsettled. The Indians are continually grumbling because the white people are in this country and threatening that unless their lands are restored they will drive them back across the Ohio river. North of White river they could easily concentrate in such numbers that should they find our people unprepared, they could overrun the most of our territory. It is hard to tell anything about what an Indian will do when he has the advantage. They are the most treacherous, cunning rascals on earth and the most brutal as well. The only safe way is to keep the advantage on our side and put the Indians on the defense. When they know that your position makes one white man equal to ten Indians there is no danger of an attack." William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 218-9.

⁶⁷ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 201.

⁶⁸ Rangers were organized under officers the same as the regular army and paid the same as army officers of the corresponding rank. The rangers were to arm and equip themselves, and provide for their own horses if they wanted one. They were given a dollar a day with a horse or seventy-five cents without a horse.—Annals of Congress, 12th congress, 1st session, II. 2228; William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 202.

⁶⁹ Col. William Hargrove was born in South Carolina, 1775. He later moved to Kentucky and was there married. Here he spent three years in Indian service and showed himself to be a brave soldier. In 1803 he moved to Indiana settling near Princeton, Indiana. In 1807 and 1812 he was in the Ranger service. He was gradually promoted to the rank of colonel. In 1811 he served in the Tippecanoe campaign. William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 203.

⁷⁰ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 212-218.

well as the Vincennes, Yellow Banks, Red Banks, Ohio, and Wabash traces were regularly patrolled by two or three men twice or three times a week.⁷¹

Every precaution was taken for the safety of the settlers. They were required to settle on or near the regularly traveled traces and build a fort or a blockhouse.⁷² It was not safe for any one to live outside the forts from the first of June to the last of November. This was the season for the Indian raids.⁷³ However if they chose they might build their houses where they intended to locate and return each night to stay at the blockhouse.⁷⁴ There were three or four of these forts⁷⁵ in the country at that time. The first of these was located on the present site of Newburg. The Sprinkles, Hayes, Lynns, Alexanders, Darbys, Frames, Wests, and the Roberts—in all thirty-five persons—lived in this fort.⁷⁶ There was also another large fort on the present site of Selvin, Indiana. This fort was probably sufficiently large to accommodate a hundred soldiers besides the settlers living there.⁷⁷ Bailey Anderson's settlement at the mouth of Cypress creek has already been de-

⁷¹ There were two other traces in southwestern Indiana, traveled to a considerable extent at one time, which, however, were not used by the settlers of Warrick county. The first of these was called the Barren trace or the Highland trace. It crossed the Ohio river about seven miles below Shippingport, at Sullivan's ferry, passed Corydon, crossed the Blue River trace, ran through the northern part of Crawford and Perry counties, near Jasper and on to Vincennes. The second of these traces ran from Rome northward seventy-five miles to Vincennes. There was a ferry across the Ohio at Rome. Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, IV., 261, 264.

⁷² Governor Harrison gave the following instruction to Colonel Hargrove, commander of the Rangers: There are always some contrary people in all walks of life who are hard to manage. The ones that you reported are not all who have been troublesome. There is no deviation from the rules. Anyone who refuses to stay in the fort when ordered, arrest them and send them to this post under guard. When the government does all that it can to protect its people they must and shall obey the rules. Their territory is under no law that can force obedience but military and all of its subjects must obey the governing rule or be sent out of it." William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 207.

⁷³ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 503, 205.

⁷⁴ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 214.

⁷⁵ Governor Harrison gave Colonel Hargrove, commander of the Rangers, the following instruction as to the building of these forts: "In making the building be sure that it is strongly put together, made out of large logs and that a stockade ten feet high be built that will enclose one acre of ground. In this enclosure should be erected a number of buildings that will safely protect fifty people."

⁷⁶ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 503.

⁷⁷ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 218.

scribed.⁷⁸ There was one other settlement in the county the exact location of which is not known. When these new comers were first mentioned they were located on a large creek, some distance from the Ohio river, ten miles to the west of the Yellow Banks trace,⁷⁹ and not far from the trace running parallel to the Ohio river. This trace was about fifteen miles to the north of the river.⁸⁰ On account of danger from the Indians they were asked to move either near the Yellow Banks trace or the new trace.⁸¹ It is supposed that these settlers moved to one of these places, for Colonel Hargrove reported that he was successful in getting all the straggling settlements gathered near one of the traces.⁸² It is probable that these settlers located in the northeastern part of the county.

The Indians became especially active in 1807. In the early spring of that year a band of Delaware Indians captured a family named Larkins, near the present site of Otwell, Pike county. Mr. Larkins was killed and Mrs. Larkins and five children carried into captivity. In July of the same year, a half breed Delaware Indian, called "Swimming Otter", reported that there was likely to be an Indian raid within the next ten days in this section of the country. A band of about twelve Indians had planned to cross the Vincennes trace near the present boundary line between Pike and Dubois counties and to move southward toward the mouth of Green river.⁸³

⁷⁸ Cummings in his sketches of a *Tour to the Western Country*, 1807-09, mentioned this settlement: "Having passed two more islands, and some new farms, in nine miles and a half, we came to a string of six or seven good looking settlements, called Scuffletown, Kentucky, on the left; and two miles and a half on the right, we observed two new settlements, a small creek, and a bluff rock, serving as a base to an elevated conic promontory terminating a wide reach, and narrowing the river so by its projection, as to make it an eligible situation for a fortified post." Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, IV., 265.

⁷⁹ The following mention is made of this settlement in Colonel Hargrove's correspondence: "They all agreed in their statements that there are several other bands scattered over the territory some distance north of the Ohio river from ten to fifteen miles east of the Yellow Banks trace to something like the same distance to the west of the same trace. They claim that there is one band of these refugees west of the Yellow Banks trace about ten miles. They were camped near a large creek." William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 214.

⁸⁰ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 218.

⁸¹ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 214.

⁸² Governor Harrison wrote to Colonel Hargrove, commander of the Rangers, as follows: "The Governor wishes to assure you of his appreciation of your successful work in gathering so many of the unfortunate refugees at points near the Yellow Banks and other traces and the large colony which you have gathered on the new trace crossing the Yellow Banks road." William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 218.

⁸³ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 201-210.

Colonel Hargrove had time to make preparation to receive the raid and the Indians were thoroughly chastised.

A little later in the year (1807) the people began to fear another attack from the Indians. In October of that year, Maj. John Sprinkle informed the governor that detached bands of Indians had been passing for eight or ten days and appeared to be carrying their luggage with them. Some of these Indians made their camp not far from Bailey Anderson's cabin. The gathering of the Indians on the Ohio in the later fall was looked on with suspicion. Colonel William Hargrove, Bailey Anderson and two other men, were sent to visit the chief, whose name was Setteedown.⁸⁴ Chief Setteedown assured these men that the tribes were only paying a peaceful visit, that the reason for their coming was the abundance of game; and that they would go back to their country by the 26th of November. True to their word, the Kickapoos, the visiting Indians from Illinois, returned again to their homes without any trouble.⁸⁵

The Shawnee Indians continued to live in what is now Warrick county until 1811. This band of Indians was under the control of Chief Setteedown, who, for one of his race, was wealthy, having a large drove of horses and cattle. Their village, already referred to, was situated near the mouth of Cypress creek, on the north bank of the Ohio river. The west end of this town was near the Newcom coal mines and scattered over a considerable territory along and back from the river. It is said that at one time the village numbered about one hundred wigwams.⁸⁶ During the years from 1808 to 1811 these Indians were peaceable⁸⁷ with the white people who lived in that section.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Bailey Anderson was to act as interpreter. William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 220.

⁸⁵ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 222-228.

⁸⁶ Will Fortune, *Warrick and Its Prominent People*, 9.

⁸⁷ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 502, 513.

⁸⁸ From 1808 to 1811, there was considerable trouble in Indiana Territory with the Indians along the frontier. Governor Harrison was able to secure a peace with some of the Indians in 1809, but Tecumseh and his followers were loud in their declarations against it and tried to prevent its being carried into effect. During this period the Indians made numerous raids along the frontier, crossing over into the white settlements in many places, killing the settlers or running off the stock. The times became so troublesome that many left the country. Warrick was considered to be a safe place even in time of war. *Vincennes Western Sun*, May 13, 1809; William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 340-363; Moses Dawson, *Life of Harrison*, 262.

Preceding the outbreak of the War of 1812, the Indians made numbers of raids along the border. The unsettled condition of the Indians probably had something to do with one of these murders committed in Warrick county, the details of which follow:

Probably as early as 1810, the Meeks family settled on Little Pigeon creek, in the northern part of Luce township, Spencer county. There Atha Meeks and his son William built log houses. In the cabin of the elder Meeks were his two grown daughters and his son, Atha, Jr. William Meeks, another one of his sons, who had a wife and one small child lived near by. It seems that by the spring of 1812 only a few straggling bands of Indians remained in the neighborhood.⁸⁹ Most of them had probably gone north under the direction of Tecumseh to prepare for a general raid along the frontier. However Chief Setteedown and his followers were still living in the county. What led the Indians to make an attack on the Meeks family can only be conjectured. It might have been, as some claim, that a family living near Darlington who had a grudge against the Meeks family, persuaded Setteedown that Meeks had been stealing his traps.⁹⁰ It was doubtless partly done at the instigation of Tecumseh, who had planned to make a concerted attack along the entire frontier,⁹¹ and in this manner so to divide the attention of the settlers as to prevent the militia from going to the protection of any other part of the State.⁹² So Setteedown's warriors before departing to the Wabash country to put on war paint and feathers, decided to massacre the nearest white settlers, toward whom they had a grudge. Thus early on the morning of April 14, 1812, an attack was made on the Meeks family. Some say that the murder was done by Setteedown, his son and an Indian called "Big Bones"⁹³ while others lay the deed to a band

⁸⁹ *History of Warrick, Spencer and Perry Counties*, 251.

⁹⁰ Will Fortune, *Warrick and Its Prominent People*, 11.

⁹¹ The story of the stealing of the traps is discarded by General Lane. Joseph Lane, Rosebury, Oregon, in a letter to Col. W. M. Cockrum, June 21, 1878, said: "There was no cause, except treachery which all Indians were full of for the Shawnee Indians murdering Atha Meeks. He was a very harmless man. It was always believed by those in a position to know that the murder was done by a few discontented members of that band, aiming to remove all traces of that family." William Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 515.

⁹² Moses Dawson, *Life of Harrison*, 262.

⁹³ *History of Warrick Spencer and Perry Counties*, 251.

of Setteedown's warriors.⁹⁴ At least it is known that only three Indians participated directly in the murder.⁹⁵ The accounts agree on this fact.

While the Indians were on their way to the Meeks cabin to make the attack they met Atha Meeks, Jr., the strong, athletic son of senior Atha on his way to a nearby spring to get some water with which to prepare breakfast. Some say that he was fired at by two of the Indians and slightly wounded in the knee and wrist. Others make no mention of this. Nevertheless two of the Indians attacked him with tomahawks but he fought so desperately that he partly succeeded in warding off with his arms the blows aimed at his head. It is probable that the two Indians had already emptied their guns or they would have made quick work of him. In the meantime Atha, Sr., had been aroused by the noise and had appeared at the door where he was shot through the brain killing him instantly. The Indian rushed forward to scalp the dead man, but Mrs. Meeks succeeded in getting her husband's body in the house and barring the door before the Indian reached it. Tradition says that she received a severe wound in the ankle from a tomahawk, thrown by the Indian.⁹⁶ William Meeks was aroused by the report of the gun and came to the rescue of his mother. One of the Indians was fatally wounded. The two who were trying to kill Atha, Jr., escaped before William had time to reload his rifle.⁹⁷

William started at full speed to a settlement in the southern part of Luce township, Spencer county to spread the news of the murder. When the news reached that place a runner was sent to French island, on the Ohio river, for the help of a keel-boat crew under Sam Perkins. The crew of seventeen men volunteered to the man. These with a number of farmers made up the posse. One account has reached us that Ratliff Boon was put in command⁹⁸ while another gives this distinction to Captain Young.⁹⁹

⁹⁴ *History of Warrick, Spencer and Perry Counties*, 252.

⁹⁵ *History of Warrick, Spencer and Perry Counties*, 252.

⁹⁶ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 514.

⁹⁷ Will Fortune, *Warrick and Its Prominent People*, 12.

⁹⁸ William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 514; Will Fortune, *Warrick and Its Prominent People*, 11.

⁹⁹ Moses Dawson, *Life of Harrison*, 262.

It was probably about noon before the party of men was ready to start. Although the Indians had six or eight hours the lead they were encumbered with their baggage and families. Traditional stories vary a great deal as to the outcome of this expedition. Some say that only Setteedown and his family were fleeing to the northward and that they were captured. Others say that Setteedown was accompanied by a band of warriors few of whom ever lived to cross the river.¹⁰⁰ Yet another account says that the posse went only to the Indian camp where they hid themselves to watch for the return of any of the Indians. At least the stories agreed that one Indian was taken captive. As to who this captive was, there is a difference of opinion. Some say that it was Chief Setteedown while others say that it was an Indian who had been hunting for two or three days and at nightfall came to the camp where he was taken.

The captive was placed in a log cabin, probably Uriah Lamar's house, near Grandview, where he was to await preliminary trial. While waiting for trial the Indian was killed. Whether he was shot by William Meek, while the guards were away to get a drink, or shot by Thomas Ewing or bled to death by Bailey Anderson stories vary. At least the Indian was killed.¹⁰¹ It is said that for months after the hasty retreat of the Indians, horses and cattle were found around Setteedowns' home. These were gathered up and thirty-five turned over to the widow of Atha Meeks.¹⁰²

There is no doubt, however, about the effect of this raid upon the people of Warrick county. A murder committed in a section of the State where the settlers felt in almost complete safety even in time of war, so alarmed the people that it was impossible to make the militia turn out to march to the assistance or protection of any other places. The alarm was so great that many families abandoned their homes flying they

¹⁰⁰ Joseph Lane, Rosebury, Oregon, in a letter to Col. W. M. Cockrum, June 21, 1878, said: "The Indians were encumbered with their women and children and could not make the speed well-mounted soldiers could, and it was generally believed that but few of them ever lived to cross White river. There was always an undertalk that Boon did a good deed and the country was well rid of the lazy vagrants." William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 514.

¹⁰¹ Will Fortune. *Warrick and Its Prominent People*, 13.

¹⁰² William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 514.

knew not where,—many without means of support.¹⁰³ Those who remained in the county took refuge in such temporary forts as they had been able to construct. It was especially bad for the people to be confined to the forts because it was corn planting time.¹⁰⁴

After the first year of the war the people of Warrick county began to feel more secure¹⁰⁵ and many people from along the frontier settled in that section of the country.¹⁰⁶ The county was never again troubled with the warlike Indians, however, for many years afterwards peaceful ones occasionally returned to hunt in that region.¹⁰⁷

ORGANIZATION OF THE COUNTY

The county was named in honor of Capt. Jacob Warrick, who fell in the Battle of Tippecanoe, November, 1811. Little is known of his life except that he was one of the heroes of Tippecanoe, where he distinguished himself for his bravery. Governor Harrison in reporting the battle said of Captain Warrick's death: "Warwick (Warrick) was shot through the body; being taken to the surgeon to be dressed, as soon as it was over, (being a man of great bodily vigor and still able to walk) he insisted upon going back to head his company, although it was evident that he had but a few hours to live."¹ Such was the bravery of the man from whom the county took its name.

In 1813, the territorial legislature of Indiana enacted a law authorizing the organization of two new counties to be called Warrick and Gibson.² At that time Warrick county included

¹⁰³ Moses Dawson, *Life of Harrison*, 263.

¹⁰⁴ *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, I., 808.

¹⁰⁵ This fact is very well shown by a study of the table of the membership of the Methodist Church from 1810-15 hereafter.

¹⁰⁶ In July, 1812, the Rangers were sent out again. This gave the people greater security. William M. Cockrum, *A Pioneer History of Indiana*, 349.

¹⁰⁷ Joseph P. Elliott, *History of Evansville and Vanderburg County*, 1897, 34.

¹ *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, I., 778.

² An act for the formation of two counties out of the county of Knox: Section 1. "Be it enacted by the Legislative Council and House of Representatives, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That from and after the passage hereof all that part of Knox County which is included in the following boundaries shall form and constitute two new counties, that is to say: Beginning at the mouth of the Wabash; thence up the same with the meanders

all the territory which now comprises the counties of Posey, Vanderburg, Warrick, Spencer, Perry and a portion of Crawford. John Ocheltree, Abel Westfall, William Polk, Robert Elliott and William Prince, all from Knox county, were appointed commissioners to locate the county seat.³ The commissioners were to meet at the mill of Jonathan Anthony on Pigeon creek and there decide upon the location. At the time appointed for their meeting a majority, for some reason, failed to appear and in their places were substituted William

thereof to the mouth of White River; thence up White River with the meanders thereof to the forks of White River; thence up the east fork of White River, to where the line between Sections No. 20 and 29, in Township No. 1 north, of Range No. 4 west, strikes the same; thence with said line to the line of Harrison County; thence with the said line dividing the counties of Knox and Harrison to the Ohio River; thence down the Ohio River to the beginning.

Section 2. Be it further enacted, that the trace of country included within the aforesaid boundaries be, and the same is hereby divided into two separate and distinct counties by a line begining on the Wabash River and known and designated by the name of Rector's base line, and with said line east until it intersects the line of Harrison County, and that from and after the first day of April, one thousand, eight hundred and thirteen, the trace of country falling within the southern division thereof, shall be known and designated by the name and style of the County of Warrick. And the northern division thereof shall be known and designated by the name and style of the County of Gibson.

James Dill,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

James Beggs,

President of the Legislative Council.

Approved, March 9, 1813: John Gibson." *Laws of Indiana, 1813*, 67.

³ "Be it enacted by the Legislative Council and House of Representatives, and it is hereby enacted by the authorities of the same, that John Ocheltree, Abel Westfall, William Polk, Robert Elliott and William Prince, all of Knox County, be and they are hereby appointed commissioners for the purpose of fixing the seat of justice in the counties of Gibson and Warrick, whose duty it shall be to convene at the house of John McJunkin, in Gibson County on the first Monday in February next, and proceed to fix the seat of justice in the county of Gibson in conformity with and in respects agreeably to an act passed at the last session of the Legislature, entitled "An Act fixing the seat of justice in all new counties hereafter laid off."

Section 2. And be it further enacted, That the aforesaid Commissioners shall immediately after they may have fixed the seat of justice in Gibson County, repair to Warrick County to the mill of Jonathan Anthony, and proceed to fix the seat of justice in the same, in the same manner as is provided in the first section of this act for fixing the seat in Gibson County.

Section 3. And be it further enacted, That the Sheriff of Knox County be and he is hereby required to serve the aforesaid Commissioners with a notice of their said appointments on or before the 20th day of January next, for which service he shall be allowed such compensation as the courts of Common Pleas in the counties of Gibson and Warrick may deem reasonable to be allowed and discharged in the same manner that other county claims are; Provided, however, that if any of the said commissioners should be disqualified to act as Commissioner by the said act for fixing the seats of justice, etc., the said courts of Common Pleas in the said counties of Gibson and Warrick, or either of them, shall have power to appoint others to supply such vacancy.

Prince, Daniel Putnam, Alexander Diven, John Milburn and William Hargrove.⁴ Evansville was selected for the capital of the county. Hugh McGary, who owned the lower part of what later became the city of Evansville, laid out a number of lots and donated some of these to the county on condition that the commissioners should locate the courthouse at that place.⁵ The deed to this land was made to Nathaniel Claypool, county agent, and dated July 15, 1814. It is probable that Colonel McGary's gift of a hundred acres of land had considerable influence in the selection of Evansville as the county seat.⁶ This was the first capital of Warrick county.

Within three months after Evansville was made the capital of Warrick, an act was passed by the territorial legislature creating out of that county the counties of Posey (with nearly its present limits) on the west and Perry on the east. Thus Warrick was limited approximately to the territory now included in Vanderburg, Warrick and Spencer counties. This left the site of Evansville in the southwestern corner of Warrick, with the result that the territorial legislature moved the county seat from Evansville to a site at the mouth of

⁴ *History of Warrick, Spencer and Perry Counties*, 37.

⁵ Joseph P. Elliott, *A History of Evansville and Vanderburg County, Indiana*, 60.

⁶ *Indiana Magazine of History*, March, 1914, 5; *History of Warrick, Spencer and Perry Counties*, 37; Joseph P. Elliott, *A History of Evansville and Vanderburg County*, 60. The commissioner had reported on June 13 before this, and June 20, Nathaniel Claypool, county agent, was directed to lay out the town of Evansville.

⁸ The act of the legislature changing the seat of justice for Warrick county was passed in September, 1814, and was as follows:

Whereas, It has been satisfactorily proven to this legislature, that Evansville, the seat of justice for the county of Warrick, is precisely in the corner of that tract of country which must hereafter form said Warrick County after the proper and necessary divisions shall take effect.

1. Be it therefore enacted by the Legislative Council and House of Representatives, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That the seat of justice of Warrick county shall be and the same is hereby established and fixed on fractional section number 7, in township number 7 south, on range number 8 west, of the second principal meridian, it being the place at first selected by the commissioners appointed to fix the seat of justice in said county, by an act of the Legislature passed at the last session: Provided, however, That Nathaniel Ewing shall convey to the county of Warrick and for the sole use of said county three hundred acres of land out of the above named fractional section at the price of two dollars per acre, and off the east end of the said fractional section.

2. Be it further enacted, That the court of the said Warrick county authorized to do county business, shall cause the said three hundred acres of land described as aforesaid, to be laid out into town lots, and sold agreeably to the

Little Pigeon creek, later called Darlington. This location was about four miles above Newburg on a tract of land owned by Nathaniel Ewing, which had been donated to the county for that purpose.⁹ The county seat was retained on the Ohio on account of its importance as a commercial route.

At first the sessions of the courts were held in private houses in various parts of the county. At the first meeting of the county board, Lawrence Younce was given the contract on October 31, 1814, to build a county jail for the sum of \$593. The specifications for this building were as follows: "The jail is to be eighteen feet square from outside to outside, to be built with a double wall of well-hewn timber twelve inches square, and to be raised in that manner so as to bring the joints of the outside wall, leaving a space between the two walls six inches to be filled up with rock and gravel. The first story to be seven feet high and the second to be eight. The lower floor to be made with square timber laid double, said timber to be twelve inches square, and done in a workman-like manner. The upper floor to be laid with timber of the same quality as the lower, but one layer of logs completely put to-

provisions of an act entitled "an act for fixing the seats of justice in all new counties hereafter to be laid off," and shall cause the public buildings of said county to be erected thereon, in such places of as is most suitable and will best promote the interest of said county.

3. Be it further enacted, That any person or persons, who has or have purchased any lot or lots in the town of Evansville of the agent of the said county of Warrick, may at his or their election either retain possession of such lots or convey such lots to the said county of Warrick, and have the purchase money refunded if paid or their bonds cancelled or given up to them, if such purchase-money be not paid by applying to the said court of Warrick county and it shall be the duty of said court on receiving sufficient titles, and upon application made as aforesaid to cause the same to be refunded and given up accordingly.

4. Be it further enacted, That the agent of said Warrick county shall on the second day of March next, or as soon thereafter as convenient, reconvey to Hugh McGary, the tract of land at Evansville, which was conveyed to the said Warrick county, except so much thereof as may be retained by individuals who purchased lots of the agent for the said county as aforesaid, and the said court of Warrick county, if any such lots are retained, shall cause the amount of purchase-money thereof when collected, to be paid to the said Hugh McGary.

5. Be it further enacted, That the circuit and other courts hereafter to be held for the said Warrick county shall be held at the house of Daniel Rhodes in said county, until a court house shall be erected on the said three hundred acres of land sufficient for the accommodation of the courts, at which time said court shall adjourn to the court house. This act to take effect from and after its passage.

⁹ Will Fortune, *Warrick and Its Prominent People*, 15.

¹⁰ *Historical Atlas of Warrick County*, 10.

gether, with a floor of planks two inches thick well spiked down in the logs of the floor, the garret floor to be of logs of nine inch timber, and ceiled with plank one and one-half inches thick and spiked accordingly. The upper story to be divided into two rooms with a partition of timber ten inches thick, well and completely confined in the wall of the said house. The roof to be of shingles of good quality. The rafters, sheathing and weatherboarding to be of good quality. In the lower to be windows nine inches square with double grates of iron bars one inch and a quarter square, put in the wall and well confined, so that the bars of the inside grates shall face the lights of the outside grates. The upper story to have one window eighteen inches square, made in the same manner as the windows in the lower story. Two doors of common size to be of planks three inches thick made double, so that each door shall be six inches thick and well put together in the manner that jail doors ought to be done, hung with large hinges extending across the door, and clasped on the opposite side and riveted, with caps of iron on the head of each rivet. In the second floor of the upper story there is to be a trap door to open on said floor, and confined in a strong manner, as the door in the wall, each door to have a bar of iron confined with a staple at one end, to extend across each door and locked in a staple in the wall of the jail with a good padlock. It is considered that all the timber out of which the said jail is to be built, is to be of good quality.”¹⁰ This building was completed May 8, 1815 and received by the county board on August 15.

The next business of the county board was to provide for a county courthouse. The plans for this building were as follows: “Twenty by twenty feet square, of well hewn logs not less than one foot, to be one story and a half high, the upper story to be six feet high. Three windows, large enough to receive eighteen lights of sash, two floors, one staircase, bar, jury box and judge’s bench, two doors, shingle roof and one partition above with a door through the same, two windows above of the same size as the windows below, completing the same with locks, bolts and hinges, all in workman-like manner on or before the first day of March, 1816.”¹¹ Daniel Deckrow

¹¹ *History of Warrick, Spencer and Perry Counties*, 39.

contracted to construct this building for \$290, Ratliff Boon and Adam Young being his securities. The building was completed long before this time and the board received it on December 4, 1815.¹²

On December 21, 1816, an act was passed (to go into effect February 1, 1817) by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana, creating Pike county out of Gibson, Knox and Perry counties. By this act the northern boundary of Warrick county was moved farther north enlarging the limits of the county,¹³ however the northern boundary was yet south of the present boundary. These boundaries were not retained long and the organization of Vanderburg and Spencer counties out of Warrick, February 1, 1818, left the latter county with almost its present boundaries.¹⁴

After Spencer and Vanderburg counties had been formed, the county seat was again left far from the center of the county. The legislature was asked to appoint a commission

¹² *Historical Atlas of Warrick County*, 1880, 10.

¹³ Pike county was formed out of Knox, Gibson and Perry counties with the following boundaries: "Beginning at a point on White River where the line dividing sections nine and ten in range nine, town one north of Buckingham's base line strikes the same, thence south with said line to the township line dividing townships three and four south, thence east with said township line until it strikes the range dividing ranges two and three west, thence north with said range until it strikes the line dividing the counties of Orange and Gibson, thence with said line until it strikes the line dividing the counties of Orange and Gibson, thence with said line until it strikes Lick Creek, thence down said creek to White River, thence down said river with the meanders thereof to the place of beginning." *Laws of Indiana*, 1816, 208.

¹⁴ Vanderburg county was formed out of Warrick, Gibson and Posey with the following boundaries: "Beginning on the Ohio river where the range line dividing ranges eleven and twelve west, strikes the same, thence north with the said range line to the center of township four, south of Buckingham's base line, thence east through the center of township four, south, to the range line dividing ranges nine and ten west, thence south with said range line dividing township five and six south, thence east to the first section line in the range nine, thence south with said section line to the Ohio river, with the meanders thereof, to the place of beginning."

Spencer county was formed out of Warrick and Perry counties with the following boundaries: "Beginning on the Ohio river where the section line passes through the center of the seventh range strikes the same; thence north with the said section line until it strikes Little Pigeon creek; thence up said creek with the meanders thereof, to the township line passing between townships four and five; thence east with said township line to the range line dividing ranges five and six; thence north to the line of Pike county, thence east with the line dividing the counties of Perry and Pike to the range line dividing ranges three and four, thence south with said range line until it first strikes Anderson River, thence down said river with the meanders thereof, to the Ohio River, thence down the same to the place of beginning." *Special Acts of 1817*, 22.

to select a more suitable location. On January 1, 1818, John Tipton, Zachariah Lindley, James B. Slaughter, Roland B. Richards, and Davis Edwards were appointed commissioners to relocate the capital of Warrick county.¹⁵ On March 19, 1818, this commission presented a report as follows:

We, the undersigned commissioners, appointed by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana for the purpose of fixing the seat of justice for the county of Warrick, do report that we have obtained, by donation, 175 acres of land from the following persons and out of the following tracts of land, to-wit: Sixty acres of land from John Barker, of the west end of the southwest quarter of section 26, in township 5 south, of range 8 west; sixty acres of land from William Berry, of the east end of the southwest quarter of section 26, in township 5 south, range 8 west; thirty acres of land from Richard Stephens, part of the northwest quarter of section 26, township 5 south, of range 8 west, to be laid off in the southwest corner of said quarter-section, immediately north of and adjoining the donation of William Berry, to be sixty poles east and west and to run north to include the said quantity of

¹⁵ Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

(Note. Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 relate to the formation of Vanderburg county).

9. John Tipton, of Harrison county, Zachariah Lindley of Orange county, James B. Slaughter, of Harrison county, Roland B. Richards, of Gibson county, and David Edwards, of Posey county, be, and they are hereby appointed commissioners to fixe the seat of justice of Warrick county, agreeably to an act entitled "an act for fixing the seat of justice in all new counties hereafter to be laid off", whose duty shall be to meet at the house of John Hargrave in the said county on the third Monday of March next and proceed to fix and establish the permanent seat of justice for the said county of Warrick, and so soon as the said county seat is established as aforesaid, the town of Darlington be, and the same is hereby declared no longer to be the seat of justice of the said county of Warrick, and the same is hereby removed from Darlington to the place so established.

10. Be it further enacted, That so soon as the seat of justice is fixed as aforesaid within the said county of Warrick, it shall be the duty of the board of county commissioners to proceed to erect the necessary public buildings thereon, and when the said buildings are, in the opinion of the Circuit Court, sufficient for their accomodation, the said court shall be adjourned thereto, after which all courts for said county shall be held at said seat of justice.

11. All persons who have purchased any lot or lots at the town of Darlington shall be permitted to reconvey the same to the commissioners of Warrick county for the use of the said county, whose duty it shall be to receive said conveyances and refund to the person or persons so conveying the original purchase money with interest thereon to be paid out of the funds of the said county of Warrick; Provided, also, That it shall be the duty of the commissioners as aforesaid to pay over unto Nathaniel Ewing the balance yet due on the original purchase of the tract of land whereon the said town of Darlington is situated and receive a conveyance from the said Nathaniel Ewing, and dispose of the same at public auction for the benefit of the said county of Warrick, either for ready money or on such credit as the circuit court of said county may direct. All acts and parts of acts coming within the purview of this act, be, and they are hereby repealed.

thirty acres, and twenty-five acres of land of William Barker, fifteen of which lie in the northeast quarter and ten in the northwest quarter of section 35, in township 5 south, of range 8 west, adjoining to and immediately south of the donation of John Barker, Sr., on which above described tracts of land we have agreed to fix the permanent seat of justice for the county of Warrick, but it is to be understood that William Berry, Sr., is to have one lot, to-wit: The second choice of lots laid off on his donation.¹⁶

This commission was signed by John Tipton, Zachariah Lindley, David Edwards and James B. Slaughter. This was the beginning of the town of Boonville.

Again the matter of public buildings came before the county authorities. At first the courts were held in a log court-house, built on the public square, but this soon became too small for the transaction of the necessary county business. Then the county commissioners ordered a new brick building thirty-five feet square to be erected, which, however, was never built. A frame building was later agreed upon instead.

A ditch two feet deep and two feet wide was filled with smoothly hewn logs to a level with the surface of the earth, on which was built a stone wall eighteen inches in height. This constituted the foundation and on it was built the frame proper. However, this building was never completed. It was weather-boarded and roofed, but was neither lathed nor plastered, and thus remained until 1836. While it was capable of holding more people than the log cabin it could hardly be used even during the summer months.¹⁷

A jail had to be provided for and in October, 1818, the county agent let the contract to John Upham with the following specifications:

The jail is to be eighteen feet square, from outside to outside, to be built with a double wall of well-hewn timber twelve inches square, and to be raised in that manner so as to bring the joints of the outside wall opposite the face of the logs of the inside wall, leaving a space between the two walls of six inches, to be filled up with rock and gravel. The first story is to be seven feet high, and the second eight, etc.¹⁸

This building was on the northeast corner of the square, but after some time it became too small and a new brick building was built on Sycamore between Third and Fourth streets.

¹⁶ *Historical Atlas of Warrick County*, 10.

¹⁷ Will Fortune, *Warrick and Its Prominent People*, 23.

¹⁸ Will Fortune, *Warrick and Its Prominent People*, 23.

At the end of our period, 1818, Warrick county had become fairly well established along the lines that she was to make her future development. Within her limits were already formed four townships—Anderson, Boon, Skelton and Campbell—with 300 voters and a total population of 1,500. The first mail route had already been established in 1817, better roads were being built and the county was gradually being brought into closer touch with the outside world. Although Warrick for the next two decades was probably not to enjoy the rapid progress granted her neighbors, she had played an important role in the early annals of southwestern Indiana and was again to assume an important place among the leading counties of southern Indiana.